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**Public action in St. Louis (Senegal)
against “urbanization at risk”**

Fatimatou Sall and Adrien Coly

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Theme/problem presentation

Fluvial and oceanic town located in the Sahel, St. Louis is an example of a city which faces to a many uncertainties and presents itself as an area of multiform vulnerability. Built in 1659, it is distinguished by a particular form of urbanization on a site characterized by the ubiquity of water.

Urbanization is the result of demographic growth which stimulated an extension of the urban fabric. Analysis of appropriations' practices of space involved by the people in a difficult space shows improper installation in low areas, muddy and wet by the "adventurers the earth" (Coly and Sall., 2014).

The process at work in the slums of St. Louis translates a form of "urban risk" on a precarious site. It is responsible of people' exposure to risks and determines a level of vulnerability sustained.

"Urbanization at risk" ignorant of the planning regulations, technical standards in terms of planning appears promoted by public action that is done under the weight of the acuteness demand for housing, the weight of urban presupposed in urban plans and a proliferation of actors in the management of the city whom are difficult to control and whose actions are difficult to coordinate.

The result is an exposition of areas to different hazards. Their combination increases the effects on people and their assets and submits the municipality to a situation of inability to respond adequately to the security of people.

Fatimatou Sall: PhD student at the Laboratory Leidi / Division of Governance of Water' Territory. She does currently a thesis on Urbanity and Biodiversity: Impacts of dynamic wetland on ecosystem services in St. Louis' city.

She holds a master's research in Geography options Ecosystems and Environment of Gaston Berger University of Saint-Louis (Senegal) and a Professional Master in Development specialty Management of Protected Areas of Senghor University (International University French language) of Alexandria (Egypt).

She participated in the research's program called CLUVA (Climate change and Urban Vulnerability in Africa: www.cluva.eu) as a junior researcher from March 2011 to December 2013.

She is responsible for the sub-committee in charge of scientific events of the Young Professionals' Association of Water and Sanitation in Senegal (AJPEAS), member of NCD and campus eau.

Adrien Coly: Doctor of geography. He teaches hydrology, water management and environment at the University Gaston Berger of Saint-Louis du Senegal (www.ugb.sn).

His research is concerned with the ratio of water to the territory through its team on the Governance of Water' Territory (www.watervgov-senegal.com) which he coordinates in the laboratory Leidi - territorial dynamics and development - in geography section of UGB.

He is the author of several scientific articles and publications. He has coordinated various projects including "cluva" climate change and urban vulnerability in Africa, funded by the European Union through the FP7.

Water and environment expert, he has produced many reports and conducted various studies in the region. Very active in civil society, he is member' founder of the National Water Partnership of Senegal (www.pnes.sn); He initiated the "Campus Eau" at UGB; and is president of the Nature Communities Development association (www.ncd-senegal.com) and the Executive Committee of Ymca-Senegal (www.ymca.sn).

In light of these factors, urbanization appears to be the source of current vulnerability of the city and population that also raises questions on public policy at the urban scale.

Political analysis or reflection in relation to the analyzed theme.

In recent decades, authorities have realized impact of the disaster on the level of community development. Various measures have been taken and different plans adopted to strengthen the laws on urban development and to answer for the requirements of a resilient city.

The regulatory framework seems to be unknown by the people and ignored by the authorities. Indeed, the codes of governing urbanization such as urban planning code related on the control of compliance and building code related to the control of safety and quality are not quite popularized and their implementation is running against of limits of the application device relative to the institutional and organizational framework accumulated to the significance of people's needs.

A variety of plans have been developed to correct the defects from the lawlessness but all have limitations and populations are still susceptible to the vulnerability. The most important are the Director urban Plan whose proposals on land use are outdated and those related to technical issues prove to be unrealistic; the Director Sanitation Plan concerns only a part of the city, is no longer valid and needs to be revised; St. Louis Plan 2030 has defined a good vision but differs by uncertain strategies on feasibility of projects; the Local Plan for Integrated Coastal Zone Management, the later is suffering from addiction donors.

These documents are also distinguished by the lack of requirement for the quantification and understanding of the phenomena to optimize decision making (Coly et al., 2012). Response strategies based on measurements do not always guarantee the safety of people.

They were often reactive to mitigate losses and damages undergone by populations. They indirectly present as incentives to anarchy. We can mention the restructuring of irregular settlements that stimulates land speculation in the surroundings and the unexpectedly installation of new arrivals as formerly in the past; the displacement of the population and the creation of public housing that encounter frequently the refusal of the people; housing estates within of the extension of the city are sometimes without preliminary measures in sometimes flood sites; the pumping during the rainy season raises questions of sustainability in relation to costs (fuel) and recurrence events...

To this we must be added the inaction of the authorities on the disparate actions of civil society. Their actions, even if they relieve the people in disaster, do not appear to be a panacea. This situation has resulted of ad hoc responses with sporadic interventions not based on projections. Populations remain vulnerable to such an extent that urbanization escapes public action, become a domain to a multitude actors and pose the problem of cooperation and coordination for the public authority in order to remedy "the urbanization at risk" in St. Louis.

Suggestions and propositions in terms of public policies

Overcome "urbanization at risk" must be a daily exercise of development with: the establishment of support tools for making decision central around a shared vision of understanding the phenomena and appropriate speech by all; the development of an adaptive mechanism based on participatory and citizen pro-

cedures; and planning of green infrastructure (low areas and muddy especially whose occupation is problematic).

Such paradigms are based on the need for mobilization of information, planning, negotiation and extension of options for integrating risk management into urban planning (Coly et al., 2013).

Management problems must be from a diagnosis that considers the fact in relation to the urban multirisk of the site and with existing measures and actions. Policies must be part of a participatory approach and need to be confronted with the issue of security and sustainability. Securing the population is a necessity in front of the risks and ensuring the safety by the public authority must take precedence over all considerations. These can be done on basis of a thorough knowledge of the phenomena and consultation that requires a high level participation in risk's governance.

Five Steps (Coly et al., 2013) are to be used for a future in this exercise:
collection of information (census data, centralization, transmission, MRP, studies compared to reference scenarios...)

consultation of all stakeholders

development of project (control needs, relevance to the possibilities, program management...)

validation program with all stakeholders;

notification (promotion initiatives, implementation instructions, monitoring and evaluation)

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